

an original specimen seen by Gray (1838) when he described *V. gouldii* and, if this is the case, the designation by Mertens (1958) of it as a lectotype is invalid.

2(v). There is no provision in the Code stating that a lectotype, once selected, is 'not subject to replacement or invalidation by the Commission. Only a neotype is subject to review, and then only if the presumed lost holotype is later rediscovered'. On the contrary, the Commission may use its plenary powers to set aside original type material and designate a neotype as a means of preserving the stability of usage of a name for a taxon.

2(vi). The species named *Varanus panoptes* by Storr (1980) is not taxonomically the same as the geographically widespread species long understood as *V. gouldii*. The application does not propose to 'suppress' the name *gouldii*, but rather to maintain *gouldii* for the widespread species and *panoptes* for the northern, more restricted, species.

3. In their application, as originally submitted in 1996, Sprackland et al. proposed that Böhme's (1991) nomenclatural arrangement be followed, and they asked the Commission to endorse this. However, Sprackland was then unaware that the status of type material could be set aside by the Commission (see 2(v) above) and, after correspondence, the revised application was published proposing the conservation of both the names *gouldii* and *panoptes* in the senses accorded them by the majority of authors. It was proposed that this should be effected by setting aside Mertens's (1958) lectotype designation and substituting an appropriate neotype of *V. gouldii*.

5. Storr's (1980) proposal of the name *V. panoptes* was for a distinct species, taxonomically separate from the widespread species known as *V. gouldii*. There was no need for him to examine the specimen proposed by Mertens as the lectotype of *V. gouldii*, although in the light of what has happened since it is unfortunate that he did not do so.

6–11. References were included in the application (para. 7) to demonstrate the continuing usages of *gouldii* and of *panoptes* as proposed by Storr. Another application, also to conserve the names *gouldii* and *panoptes* in their traditional senses, was submitted by G.M. Shea & H.G. Cogger only slightly later than that by Sprackland et al., and included extensive lists of references for both names. These lists consisted of 57 references for the use of *gouldii* since 1991, and 58 references for the use of *panoptes* since its publication (13 references from 1994 to 1996, when the list was compiled). It is not correct to say that 'as Böhme's paper became more widely known usage of the name *panoptes* declined to reach the 1997 situation where it is now hardly, if ever, used, while the original names *gouldii* [in the sense of the restricted species] and *flavivirgatus* for the related [widespread] species have near universal usage'.

Gray, J. E. 1845a. *Catalogue of the specimens of lizards in the British Museum*.

Gray, J. E. 1845b. *The zoology of the voyage of H.M.S. Erebus & Terror, under the command of Captain Sir James Ross, during the years 1839 to 1843*.

Comment on the proposed conservation of *Coluber infernalis* Blainville, 1835 and *Eutaenia sirtalis tetrataenia* Cope in Yarrow, 1875 (currently *Thamnophis sirtalis infernalis* and *T. s. tetrataenia*; Reptilia, Squamata): proposed conservation of the subspecific names by the designation of a neotype for *T. s. infernalis* (Case 3012; see BZN 55: 224–228)

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I am much interested in the application and wish to lend my support for the conservation of *Thamnophis sirtalis infernalis* (Blainville, 1835) and *T. s. tetrataenia* (Cope in Yarrow, 1875). The case involves the stability of usage of these names, and frequency of usage is the determining factor especially in the non-taxonomic literature (inasmuch as taxonomists are the guardians of nomenclatural communication through all aspects of biology, not just among taxonomists). The usage of *T. s. tetrataenia* for the San Francisco garter snake in non-taxonomic as well as taxonomic literature in the past several decades is so extensive that replacement by the name *infernalis* would clearly be pervasively confusing throughout the broad spectrum of usage the name enjoys (paras. 5 and 6 of the application). A switch of the meaning of the name *infernalis*, currently used for the more widely distributed California red-sided garter snake, would serve no useful purpose other than rectification of a long-standing, unwitting and until now unknown error of identification. That error would be rectified by the proposed action of the present application, without disturbing established nomenclatural custom. I therefore strongly recommend approval of the proposals.

Comments on the proposed conservation of usage of 15 mammal specific names based on wild species which are antedated by or contemporary with those based on domestic animals

(Case 3010; see BZN 53: 28-37, 125, 192-200, 286-288; 54: 119-129, 189; 55: 43-46, 119-120)

(1) Nagy Szabolcs

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I have read the application and comments with great interest.

As part of my job I give lectures to students on animal breeding, including domestication, and I am sure that the proposals for the use of names contained in the application will be very useful to me. I have found much confusion in the Hungarian literature, as elsewhere, in the use of Latin names for domestic animals and their ancestors. I will henceforth be following the use of names set out in the application.

(2) Alvaro Mones

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I completely agree with the proposals in this application.

The only point on which I am a little doubtful is in the case of the guinea pig, *Cavia aperea* Erxleben, 1777. The systematics of caviids, and particularly of the genus *Cavia* Pallas, 1766, is in great need of revision. The name *C. aperea* is being applied to wild representatives with a very wide distribution, from northeastern Brazil to Uruguay and Argentina, although it is possible that different populations are not conspecific. As far as I know, it has not been demonstrated that *C. aperea* is the ancestor of the domestic form, *C. porcellus* (Linnaeus, 1758). The type locality of both forms is said